



**Zambian Ambassador to the U.S. Dr. Inonge Mbikusita-Lewanika Commends USADF for its role in spear-heading community-based economic empowerment in Zambia**

*Her Excellency Dr. Inonge Mbikusita-Lewanika thanked the United States African Development Foundation (USADF) for its valuable assistance to smallholder agricultural production and to creating jobs and income for Zambia's youth, both of which are vital for the nation's growth and prosperity.*

WASHINGTON – November 27, 2007 – Her Excellency Dr. Inonge Mbikusita-Lewanika thanked the United States African Development Foundation (USADF) for its high impact support for grassroots development in Zambia. The Ambassador lauded the Foundation's work: "ADF is spearheading community economic empowerment in rural areas through its assistance to smallholder production schemes. The Foundation is reaching marginalized people, creating jobs for youth, increasing their knowledge and skills, and having a rapid impact on the poor."

In a personal meeting, USADF President Lloyd Pierson thanked the Ambassador for her remarks. Mr. Pierson commented that USADF's program in Zambia is an excellent example of the agency's focus on creating jobs, income and opportunities for those living at the lower end of the spectrum. He also thanked the Ambassador for her strong support of the strategic partnership ADF has with the Government of Zambia to co-fund activities in the country and for her leadership on the new Zambia Youth Empowerment Fund (ZYEF), an initiative jointly-funded by USADF and the ImagineNations Group, with financial contributions from several American corporations.

The United States African Development Foundation restarted its program operations in Zambia in 2005. Since then, it has funded twelve projects totaling over \$2.7 million. Ten of those projects are in the agricultural sector where USADF is helping improve the well-being of rural families by assisting smallholders to expand production and diversity into higher value crops such as: paprika, organic cotton, organic groundnuts, organic mushrooms, organic rice, vegetables, honey, dairy farming and fish farming. The investments in organic production will help link small-scale Zambian producers to global markets, which provide excellent income opportunities for smallholders and foreign exchange for the country. ZYEF was created in 2006 to respond to Zambia's youth unemployment crisis. It supports a large-scale jobs and income opportunities program for Zambians aged 16 to 30, through direct funding of youth-focused enterprises, creation of a micro-credit facility for young people, and integration of youth into on-going agricultural projects.

The United States African Development Foundation (USADF) is a United States Government agency dedicated to expanding access to economic opportunity in Africa. Over the past 23 years, USADF has funded 1,800 projects representing in excess of \$150,000,000 in support of African entrepreneurs and local African communities. For more information on USADF, its programs and its application guidelines, go to [www.usadf.gov](http://www.usadf.gov).